THE EMERSON COLLEGE THEATRE

presents ...

FOR RESERVATIONS
CALL 262-2010

JAN 13, 14, 15
at 8:30
DIRECTED BY
SUSAN
DORLEN

MOLIÈRE'S

The MISANTHROPE

January 13, 14, and 15, 1965 at 8:30 P.M.

The Misanthrope

a comedy
by
Molière

Directed by
SUSAN DORLEN

Scenery Designed
by
ROBERT JERONIMO

Costumes Designed
by
BARBARA B. MATHESON

Lighting Designed
by
GENE HATCH

— *PERSONAE* —

Basque, *Célimène's servant* ..... STANLEY PETERS
Alceste, *in love with Célimène* ..... SPALDING GRAY
Philinte, *Alceste's friend* ..... RONALD RITCHELL
Oronte, *in love with Célimène* ..... JON PETER BUMSTEAD
Célimène, *Alceste's beloved* ..... JUDY JOHNSON
Eliante, *Célimène's cousin* ..... TRACI GOSS
Acaste, *a marquis* ..... HAROLD ROBERT LUBIN
Clitandre, *a marquis* ..... ALVIN B. KUPPERMAN
A Guard, *of the Marshalsea* ..... WAYNE G. LOCKE
Arsinoe, *a friend of Célimène's* ..... KAREN LESLIE AUSTIN
Dubois, *Alceste's valet* ..... STEPHEN SNOW

Act 1 ..... *the garden of Célimène's house*

INTERMISSION

Act 2 ..... *a room in Célimène's house*
Act 3 ..... *gallery and room in Célimène's house*

INTERMISSION

Act 4 ..... *a room in Célimène's house*
Act 5 ..... *a room in Célimène's house*

COMING IN MARCH: The world première of *The Intruders,* by Myron Levoy, directed by Paul john Austin.

— *PRODUCTION STAFF* —

Production Stage Manager ..... Garrett G. Dettling
Stage Manager ..... Dan Blaszczuk
Assistant Stage Manager ..... Howard Rogut
Technical Director ..... Sam Beaulieu
Production Coordinator ..... Robert Lopez-Cepero
Master Carpenter ..... Barry Bailey
Master Painter ..... Robert Jeronimo
Master Electrician ..... Michael C. Wimsett
Assistant Costume Designer ..... Ronnie Friedman
Costumer ..... Charlotte Morrison
Costume Assistantship ..... Lawrence Blumsack
Costume Scholarships ..... Cynthia Granto
Marion Cantone
Make-up Director ..... Jack Stein
Assistant Make-up Director ..... Al Accardi
Master of Trim Props ..... Tim Smith
Mistress of Hand Props ..... Cookie Austin
Master of Sound ..... Richard W. Green
Publicity Director ..... Alfred Corona
Theatre Manager ..... Donald L. Evans

— *THE PLAY* —

The Misanthrope is Molière's most complex and sophisticated play and in the opinion of many admirers represents his greatest achievement in the theatre. It differs from his other comedies in that it is not the study of a deviant individual depicted against the background of a stable, healthy, and rational society. Most comic characters exist by virtue of their unreasonableness, their eccentric behavior, and their excesses; and almost always they are contrasted with characters who stand for common sense and moderation. In *The Misanthrope* however Molière's irony is turned on society as well as on the protagonist, and *la société mondaine* in which Alceste moves does not constitute the usual happy norm.

The world of fashion we are shown here is made up of sham, of pretentiousness, of injustice, of malice. It is a world of selfishness and lies, in which bad poets are praised, in which influence and not equity controls the administration of justice, in which externals are taken as sure indications of true merit. It is a world of insincerity, and when we compare Alceste to the complacent members of his group we must needs admire his integrity. As a consequence, many sentimentalists and romantics regard Alceste as a thoroughly noble and admirable character, the victim of a corrupt society. Rousseau, for example, was outraged by the logic of the piece and protested against the laughter directed against the hero. "The play," he wrote, "is dangerous because it seduces by a semblance of reason; because it teaches us to prefer the usages and maxims of the world to exact probity; because it makes wisdom consist in a certain medium between vice and virtue."

Needless to say, Rousseau's sanctimonious and humorless reaction to the play represents a serious misreading of the work and turns the comedy into a semi-tragedy. Alceste is a perfectly legitimate comic protagonist and not at all the paragon that the philosopher sees him as being. He is comic because of his lack of a sense of proportion, in the violence of his indignation over small matters, in his indifference to the *moeurs* of the salon, in the manner in which he upbraids and attempts to reform the woman he loves, and in the fact that he is completely devoid of a sense of humor. We admire his uncompromising honesty, but in dreaming of an ideal world in which truth is the only goal he shows himself to be completely unrealistic. Alceste is a thoroughly extravagant young man, and such a person is rightfully laughed at.